

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated February 18, 2011. Claims 12-14, 16, 18, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26 and 28 are presented for examination, of which Claims 12, 20 and 21 are in independent form. Claims 15, 17, 19, 25, 27 and 29 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter, and will not be mentioned further. Claims 12, 14, 16, 20, 21, 24 and 26 have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicant regards as the invention. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 12-14, 16, 18, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26 and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication 2002/0156947 (Nishio) in view of U.S. Patent 5,903,716 (Kimber et al.).

Applicant submits that the independent claims, together with their dependent claims, are patentable over the cited prior art for at least the following reasons.

An exemplary aspect of the present invention relates to a network device management apparatus which represents a network device which does not support a network-compatible Plug and Play (PnP) protocol. According to certain embodiments, the management apparatus searches for printers which support PnP (S3-2 in Fig. 3 and S6-4, Yes branch in Fig. 6) and those which do not support PnP (S6-6 in Fig. 6). For any printer found, the management apparatus generates a device ID for each of the plurality of printer drivers associated with the printer and registers the device ID in a management table (Figs. 5 and 7).

Further according to these embodiments, in a subsequent search, if the management apparatus receives no response from a printer found in a previous search, which typically signifies that the printer is no longer available, it issues a corresponding notification via

PnP (S6-10 in Fig. 6, para. [0088]). This enables a client apparatus which supports PnP to take necessary actions, such as deleting the printer drivers associated with the printer (para. [0102]).¹

Claim 12 recites, among other features, “request means for submitting a get request for device information to the network device specified by the device ID sent by said sending means [already registered]”. It further recites “notification means for notifying the client apparatus that a service of the network device has stopped if said network device management apparatus does not receive a response to the get request from the network device”.

These features are not believed to be disclosed or suggested in *Nishio* and *Kimber*, considered separately or in any permissible combination. *Nishio* relates to an information processing system which includes an automatic installer which supports PnP and a proxy server which may represent a network device which does not support PnP (*see* Abstract). It is not believed to teach sending a request to a network device found in a previous search and, in the absence of a response, informing a client of the inoperable status of the network device. As Applicant understands, *Kimber* relates to a system which controls a printer to operate as one of a plurality of virtual printers respectively corresponding to a plurality of printer configurations (*see* col. 2, lines 5-14). It is not believed to teach conducting a search for network devices and certainly not recording the results of the search and conducting the search again at a later time.

Therefore, Claim 12 is believed patentable over *Nishio* and *Kimber*, considered separately or in any permissible combination.

Independent Claims 20 and 21 recite features similar to those discussed above with respect to Claim 1 and, therefore, are also believed to be patentable over *Nishio* and *Kimber* for the reasons discussed above.

¹ It is to be understood that the scope of the claims is not limited by the details of this or any other embodiment that may be referred to.

A review of the other art of record has filed to reveal anything which, in Applicant's opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of the art discussed above, as references against the independent claims herein. Those claims are therefore believed patentable over the art of record.

The other claims in this application are each dependent from independent Claims 12 or 20 discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application.

Applicant's undersigned representative may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectively submitted,

/Agatha H Liu/
Agatha H. Liu
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 65,323

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
1290 Avenue of the Americas
New York, New York 10104-3800
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200